

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. Claims 1-6 have been withdrawn. Claims 7-17 are rejected. Claim 18 is added hereby.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 14 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. The language at issue in each claim is as follows: “wherein said at least one fluid drain opening is four fluid drain openings”. The independent claims of claims 14 and 17 call out “at least one fluid drain opening,” which means that one or more fluid drain openings may be present. Claims 14 and 17, then, further limit this independent claim language by specifying that *four* fluid drain openings are used, not merely one or more. The language is, thus, very precise. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 14 and 17 are now in condition for allowance.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 7-9 and 11-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,230,552 (Schipper et al.) and of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schipper et al., Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of claims 7, 9, 12 and 15. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 7, 12, and 15, and claims 8-11, 13-14, and 16-17 depending respectively therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

Schipper et al. discloses a module 10 for communicating utilities to a worksurface. Module 10 includes two housing assemblies 16 and 18 mounted in opposing relationship, housing 16 being adapted with utility connector module 20 to dispense electrical power and housing 18 being adapted with utility connector module 24 to connect to communication utilities. Housings 16,18 are each pivotally attached to move between open and closed positions on bracket/mounts 28. Each bracket 28 is supported in opposing relationship by a support piece 30. (column 3, lines 29-45). Housing 16 includes an outer half 36 and an inner half 38. (column 3, lines 61-64). Housing 18 includes an outer half 36 and a second inner half 162. (column 5, lines 51-54).

In contrast, claim 7 recites in part “providing a duplex outlet having a receptor face and a housing connected to said receptor face, said housing having a side opposite said receptor face.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed or suggested by Schipper et al., or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Claim 9 recites in part “wherein at least one said hole is placed through said housing proximate to said at least one location.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed or suggested by Schipper et al., or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Claim 12 recites in part “a housing having a side and an opposite side; a plurality of electrical terminals accessible through openings in said side; and at least one fluid drain opening in said opposite side.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed or suggested by Schipper et al., or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Claim 15 recites in part “a housing having a side and an opposite side; a plurality of electrical terminals accessible through openings in said side; and at least one fluid drain opening in said opposite side.” (Emphasis added). Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed or suggested by Schipper et al., or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Regarding claim 7, the Office Action at page 3 provides that housings 16,18 of Schipper et al. each include a side 28 which is opposite a receptor face 74. Schipper et al., however, discloses reference number 28 as a bracket 28 which is used to connect housings 16,18 with a support piece 30. That is, bracket 28 is disclosed as being a separate piece from housings 16 and 18, not as a side of either housing 16 or 18. Figs. 4 and 6, for example, show housing assemblies 16 and 18,

neither of which includes bracket 28. Schipper et al., thus, fails to disclose a housing having a side opposite a receptor face.

Regarding claim 9, even assuming (for the sake of argument) that angled wall 74 of Schipper et al. corresponds to the receptor face of the present invention and assuming (for the sake of argument) that wall 154 (rear wall of bracket 28) or inwardly extending flanges 157 correspond to the side opposite the receptor face of the present invention, neither rear wall 154 nor flanges 157 include a hole placed proximate the location where fluid will gather. Page 3 of the Office Action indicates that ledge 50 of Schipper et al. corresponds to this fluid gathering location. However, Schipper et al. discloses ledge 50 as forming, along with a similar ledge on inner half 38, a “substantially liquid tight joint.” (column 3, lines 66-67, column 4, line 1). Thus, Schipper et al. fails to disclose a hole proximate ledge 50.

Regarding claims 12 and 15, first, the Office Action at page 3 indicates that housing 16, 18, side 222, and side 28 correspond respectively to the housing, the side, and the opposite side of the present invention. As argued above, Applicants submit that Schipper et al. fails to disclose bracket 28 being a side of housing 16 or 18. Second, Schipper et al. discloses reference number 222 (which is referred to as a web) as being a part of support piece 30, which is also a separate piece from either housing 16 or 18. Webs 222 serve as a stop to prevent overrotation of housing assemblies 16 and 18 as they pivot upwardly. (column 6, lines 57-63)(Fig. 2). Schipper et al., thus, fails to disclose webs 222 as being a side of housing 16 or 18. Third, web 222 is a piece which appears to lie horizontally. By contrast, the figures of Schipper et al. do not show that bracket 28 has a side which lies horizontally; rather, the sides of bracket 28 appear to be vertical. Schipper et al., thus, fails to disclose bracket 28 having a side which is *opposite* web 222. Fourth, Schipper et al. discloses bracket 28 as having an open bottom allowing fluid to drain away. (column 5, lines 27-37). Thus, this open bottom is not in a side of bracket 28, as bracket 28 does

not have a bottom side. Schipper et al., thus, fails to disclose a fluid drain opening in a side of bracket 28.

An advantage of the present invention is that it provides a housing with at least one hole in a side of the housing.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 7, 12, and 15, and claims 8-11, 13-14, and 16-17 depending respectively therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Claim 18 has been added to further protect the patentable subject matter of the present invention. Claim 18 recites in part “said at least one hole is configured for draining a fluid from said duplex outlet.” (Emphasis added). None of the prior art references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest this patentable feature.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the pending claims are definite and do particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

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